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Homeric poems were composed on the mainland of Greece, already successfully launched by English scholars, is ably defended, and the surprising conclusions are ably drawn that the autochthonous Pelasgian race in ancient Thessaly and Arcadia, when covering the larger part of the lower peninsula, and before the intrusion of the fair-haired Achaeans, developed the literary Aeolic dialect and the hexameter verse, in which the Homeric poems were first composed. These poems are therefore Pelasgian, with an Achaean infusion after the Achaeans became the conquering and ruling caste.

Many details in this long and variegated argument will doubtless be disputed and disproved. The book invites *adversaria* as much as a book of Wilamowitz-Moellendorff; but its main contentions are likely to maintain themselves, and they reflect great credit on the penetration and comprehensiveness of the best English classical scholarship.

BERNADOTTE PERRIN.

*Roman Public Life.* By A. H. J. GREENIDGE. [Handbooks of Archaeology and Antiquities.] (London and New York: Macmillan. 1901. Pp. xx, 484.)

In his preface the author states that "the object of this work is to trace the growth of the Roman constitution, and to explain its working during the two phases of its maturity, the developed Republic and the Principate." It was his desire "to touch, however briefly, on all the important aspects of public life, central, municipal, and provincial; and, thus, to exhibit the political genius of the Roman in connection with all the chief problems of administration which it attempted to solve."

Those who are interested in the progress of scholarship in the field of Roman history have felt a great need of a convenient, up-to-date manual of the Roman constitution. To supply this want several books have recently appeared, among which may be mentioned Taylor's *Constitutional and Political History of Rome* and Abbott's *History and Description of Roman Political Institutions*, as well as the volume now before us. A merit which Mr. Greenidge shares with the two authors here mentioned is the acceptance of Mommsen's view of the imperial constitution—a view necessarily familiar to the Germans but comparatively unknown to the English reader. We were taught by Gibbon, Merivale, and Duruy that the Augustan government was an absolute monarchy disguised in republican forms; but Mommsen has demonstrated that it was in fact a dyarchy, or joint rule of the *Princeps* and the Senate. Although Mr. Greenidge has well treated the constitution of the dyarchy, his space has not permitted him to show how it developed into the absolute monarchy of Diocletian. While regretting this limitation, the reader hitherto unacquainted with Mommsen's view will doubtless feel grateful for the light he receives from this volume. The description of the mature republican constitution, on the other hand, has nothing new for the English reader. But the treatment of this subject shows experience in dealing with legal and con-

stitutional questions and a fair appreciation of the mutual relations of the various governmental forces.

The historical introduction to his work, however, is substantially worthless, based as it is on the groundless hypothesis of an original "patrician state." It is true that the view Mr. Greenidge here represents is still widely accepted; but there have always been eminent scholars who have protested against this absurd fiction, and we may reasonably hope that the rising generation will abandon it altogether. Naturally those who object to the hypothesis in question do not believe that the *gentes* and the *curiæ* were exclusively patrician. The *gens* in fact has been thoroughly misunderstood. It is not a primitive institution, but developed with the rise of the aristocracy. In Greece, for instance, it is post-Homeric. Again, in his discussion of the Servian "constitution," though he admits that the organization known by this name was simply military, he persists in confusing the army with the political assembly of the centuries. This confusion, however, he shares with many other writers. He has made a serious mistake, too, in adopting from Mommsen the distinction between *comitia* and *concilium* according to which the former signifies an assembly of the whole people, and the latter of a part of the people. These definitions were probably invented by Laelius Felix, a jurist of the second century A. D.; at least they can be traced no farther back and were certainly unknown in republican times, when the assemblies were still living. The republican annalists, represented by Livy, did not hesitate to apply the term *concilium* to the gathering of the whole people, and were equally ready to call the plebeian assembly a *comitia*.

Enough has perhaps been said, by way of criticism on Mr. Greenidge's book, to raise the question whether the conventional view of early Roman history which he represents is not radically wrong, and whether a more critical method of investigation directed by an historical rather than a juristic spirit would not yield more satisfactory results.

G. W. BOTSFORD.

*A History of Egypt in the Middle Ages.* By STANLEY LANE-POOLE, Professor of Arabic at Trinity College, Dublin. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1901. Pp. xv, 382.)

THE monuments of ancient Egypt are so numerous, and often on so grand a scale, its civilization goes back to such a remote past, the imagination of children is stirred so early by the story of Joseph and of the Hebrews in bondage, that it is perhaps not surprising that to many Egypt is simply the land of the pyramids, the land of the Pharaohs and the Exodus, and that to them the whole history of Egypt during the Middle Ages is a sealed book. Many, no doubt, have a feeling that the history of the country during this period has little of interest or of importance. Nor is the general reader entirely to blame for having this impression. We have a great number of books on ancient Egyptian